

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

080935Z Jan 02

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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	DINT-00	DODE-00	DOTE-00
	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	VC-00
	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01	NSAE-00
	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PC-01	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00
	P-00	SP-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	DRL-02
	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	SWCI-00	/007W		
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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0656  
INFO NSC WASHDC  
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY  
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 000061

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JENDAYI FRAZER  
LONDON FOR CHARLES GURNEY  
PARIS FOR CHARLES NEARY  
NAIROBI FOR TERRY PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/08/12

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: ZIMBABWE: ZVOBGO PREDICTS MUGABE WILL LOSE THE  
ELECTION

REF: '01 HARARE 3813

CLASSIFIED BY POLITICAL OFFICER TODD FAULK FOR REASONS:  
1.5 (B) AND (D).

1. (C) IN A DECEMBER 20 LUNCH WITH AMBASSADOR SULLIVAN AND POLOFF, ZANU-PF MP AND MASVINGO "SUPREMO" EDDISON ZVOBGO RUMINATED ON REPRESSIVE LEGISLATION BEFORE PARLIAMENT (REPORTED REFTTEL), MASVINGO POLITICS, AND THE UPCOMING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. ZVOBGO HAD FEW KIND WORDS FOR HIS OLD BROTHER-IN-ARMS MUGABE, SAYING THE AGING PRESIDENT DOES NOT LISTEN TO HIM OR ANYONE ELSE ANYMORE. ZVOBGO STATED THAT MUGABE IS BECOMING MORE UNPOPULAR ALL THE TIME AND WOULD LOSE THE MARCH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. "HOW DO YOU CONVINCE VOTERS TO VOTE FOR YOU BY BEATING THEM UP?" HE ASKED RHETORICALLY.

2. (C) ZVOBGO INTIMATED THAT ONE OF THE KEY AREAS MUGABE WOULD LOSE WOULD BE MASVINGO PROVINCE. HE HINTED THAT HE AND HIS SUPPORTERS WOULD NOT BE CAMPAIGNING FOR THE PRESIDENT. HOWEVER, HE DENIED THAT ZANU-PF SPLITS IN MASVINGO WOULD COST MUGABE THE ELECTION, OBJECTING TO THE IDEA THAT "FACTIONALISM" IS A PROBLEM IN THE PROVINCE. ZVOBGO DID NOTE THAT VIRTUALLY NO KARANGANS (THE SHONA SUBGROUP THAT DOMINATES MASVINGO) WERE IN CABINET OR PERMANENT SECRETARY POSITIONS, A FACT THAT WILL HURT MUGABE IN THE ELECTION. "MUGABE WILL LOSE THE ELECTION ON HIS OWN," THE MP PREDICTED.

3. (U) BELYING ZVOBGO'S CLAIMS, THE JANUARY 3 EDITION OF THE GOVERNMENT-SUPPORTED "ZIMBABWE MIRROR" REPORTED THAT THE ZVOBGO FACTION (BACKED BY OUSTED GOVERNOR  
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DZIKAMAI MAVHAIRE AND THE PROVINCIAL WAR VETERANS ASSOCIATION) RECENTLY SENT A LETTER TO PRESIDENT MUGABE IMPLOING HIM TO RESOLVE THE ZANU-PF SPLITS IN MASVINGO. THE LETTER REPORTEDLY DEMANDED THAT MUGABE REMOVE THE PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE INSTALLED LAST YEAR AND HEADED BY HIGHER EDUCATION MINISTER SAMUEL MUMBENGEGWI AND CURRENT GOVERNOR JOSIAH HUNGWE (AND BACKED BY VICE-PRESIDENT SIMON MUZENDA), OR FACE LOSING THE ELECTION. THE ARTICLE REPORTED THAT THE ZANU-PF TOP BRASS WAS DIVIDED OVER HOW TO HANDLE THE ZVOBGO DEMAND.

4. (C) COMMENT: AS ZIMBABWE'S MOST POPULOUS PROVINCE, AND ONE NEARLY EVENLY DIVIDED IN SUPPORT FOR THE MDC AND ZANU-PF, MASVINGO WILL BE CRUCIAL TO MUGABE'S CHANCES FOR RE-ELECTION. IF MUGABE CANNOT PLACATE ZVOBGO, WHO REMAINS POPULAR IN THE PROVINCE, AND GET HIS BACKING IN THE ELECTION, THE PRESIDENT RISKS LOSING A LARGE BLOCK OF VOTES. THE FACTIONAL SPLITS THAT HAVE WRACKED ZANU-PF IN MASVINGO FOR YEARS ARE PROBABLY NOT AS GREAT A FACTOR FOR MUGABE AS THE PRESS WOULD SUGGEST BECAUSE THE EXECUTIVE INSTALLED BY MUGABE AND MUZENDA HAS LITTLE PUBLIC SUPPORT. THE KEY WILL BE CONVINCING ZVOBGO AND HIS CADRES TO BACK THE PRESIDENT, AND THAT APPEARS

INCREASINGLY UNLIKELY AS IT WOULD REQUIRE A HUMILIATING  
ABOUT-FACE BY MUGABE. END COMMENT.

SULLIVAN

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